



## KNEE PROTECTION AIRBAG APPARATUS

The present application is based on and claims priority from Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-267723, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

## 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a knee protection airbag apparatus enabled so that an airbag to be expanded and inflated by blowing an inflating gas thereinto can protect knees of an occupant.

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## 2. Related Art

Hitherto, there has been an apparatus for protecting a knee of an occupant, which has a configuration wherein a casing, which accommodates a folded airbag and an inflator for supplying an inflating gas to an airbag, is placed below a lower part of a column cover, which is provided beneath a steering column, to thereby cover a casing opening with an airbag cover (refer to, for example, Japanese Patent Publication No. JP-A-10-315894.).

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In such a kind of an airbag apparatus, interior components, such as a lower panel of an instrument panel, are disposed around the airbag cover. According to a certain vehicle design, only an airbag system may be disposed below the lower panel.

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Further, it is preferable that an airbag cover of an airbag apparatus is fixed to a casing so firmly as to withstand a force